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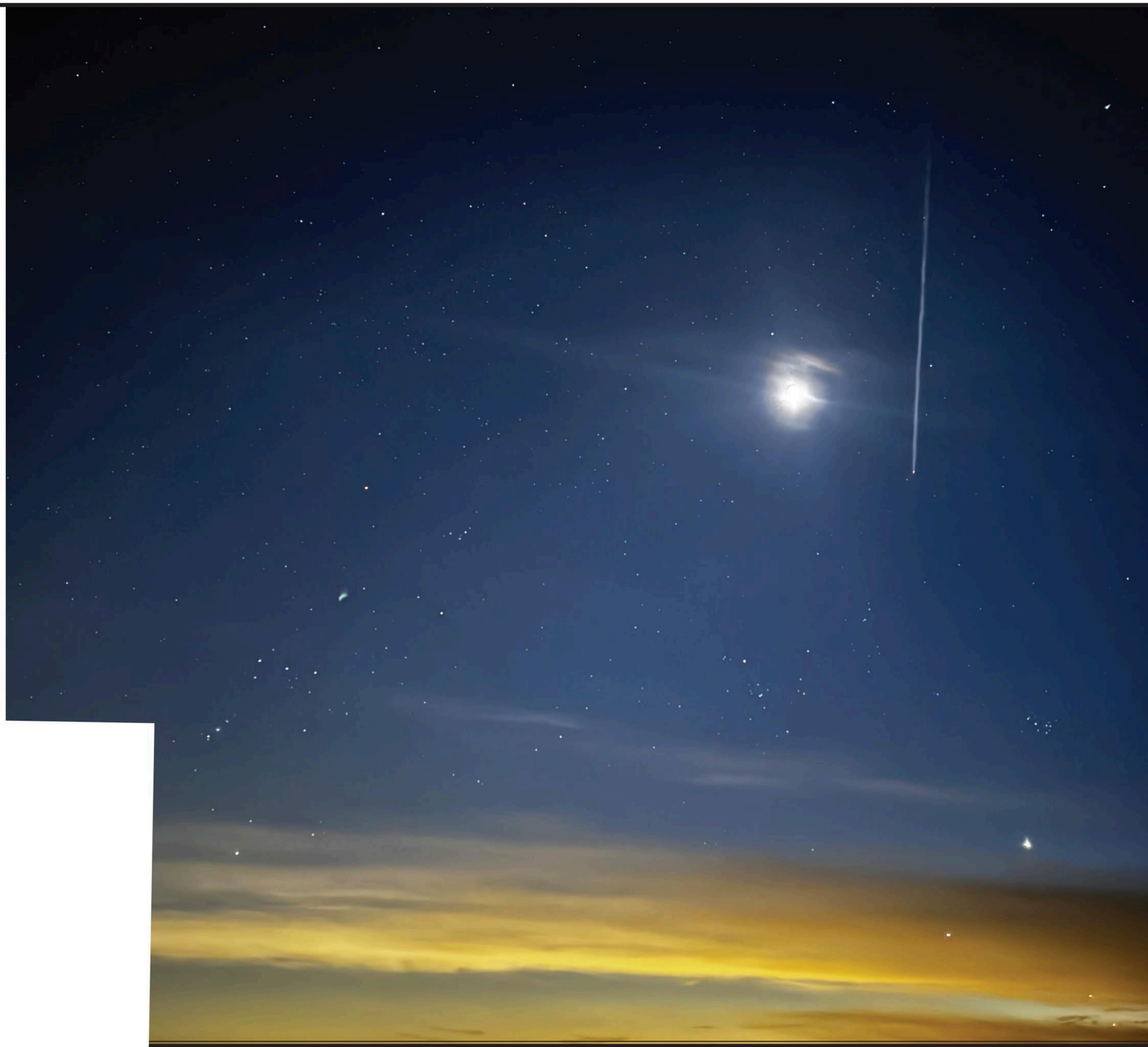
Village Council approves updated Parks and Beaches Master Plan **PAGE 4**

Township meeting addresses data center concerns **PAGE 6**

2026 Guide unveiled **PAGES 10-11**

Exit One Events festivals landing in New Buffalo **PAGE 18**



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City Council approves special event applications

AUTHORIZES NEGOTIATIONS WITH TOWNSHIP FOR FIRE SERVICES CONTRACT

BY THERESE DONNELLY

The New Buffalo City Council started their April 20 meeting with a public hearing to decide how to proceed with an attendance issue at the Planning Commission meetings.

City Manager Darwin Watson explained Commissioner Roxanne Rau had three consecutive unexcused absences from regular meetings. Under city code, when a committee or board member does not meet attendance requirements, the Council must decide to excuse the absences or remove the member.

After discussion the council voted bring a resolution at the May council meeting to remove Rau from the Commission. The council will then appoint a replacement commissioner to complete the term of the vacated seat.

The council also approved special event applications for six events planned by Exit One Events for the 2026 season.

Watson told the council all events are to take place at Lions Park, with the exception of the Home Builder and Garden Festival and the Beach Glass Brew Festival, both of which will take place on Whittaker Street.

Executive Director John Moultrie addressed the council to state the events will encourage visitors to downtown businesses. He also said he is arranging a shuttle service to alleviate parking issues

The council authorized Watson to negotiate with New Buffalo Township for a fire services contract.

The current agreement expires December 31, 2026. The city entered an agreement with the township to address a need for fire protection in the city.

Based on the recommendations of the Planning Commission, the council approved three site plans. The approved plans include the installation of access stairs for a residence at 312 Marquette Drive, construction of a new garage at 432 S Smith St and construction of an addition to the residence at 901 W. Water Street.

Zo's Donuts has approval to once again sell donuts from its food truck. The council approved the hawking and peddling license applications, allowing the business to sell from 8 to 11 a.m. from June 19 to Sept. 7.

St Mary of the Lake Catholic Church will have its annual festival May 22 through 24. The council approved a special events application that includes street closures and signage.

The council also approved a special event application for the Le Tour de Shore bike event on June 20. The bike tour starts in Chicago and will end at Oselka Park Pavilion. The application includes permission for utility connections as well as use of the park.

Watson told the council all events are to take place at Lions Park, with the exception of the Home Builder and Garden Festival and the Beach Glass Brew Festival, both of which will take place on Whittaker Street.

The council previously accepted Kona Dunes' proposal for beach concessions. At the April meeting, they approved a concession agreement developed by city staff, granting Kona exclusive food vendor rights for the beach, except during special events, in exchange for five percent of gross sales in 2026 and 5.25 percent of gross sales in 2027.

Watson informed the council the dock at the transient marina needs to be painted. Based on quotes obtained by city staff, the council approved a bid of $66,800 from E.I. Construction.

As part of work to improve the playing fields at Oselka Park, the council approved a bid from Hostetler Lawn and Landscaping to address drainage issues at the softball field.

Funding for the $46,992 project will be allocated from the Municipal Allocation and Park Improvement Fund.

How do you deal with disrespect intelligently —indifference, silence, and at times, revenge.
— Dino N. Fatouros

Local Government Meetings

New Buffalo Times

Democracy Requires Transparency

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Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 5:30PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP BOARD
HOWARD MALES, MICHELLE HEIT, MICHELLE HANNON, PATTY IAZZETTO, BARBARA ANDERSON
Board meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 4PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 6:30PM
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Sheriff, Chuck Heit
Undersheriff, Greg Sanders
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Meets at 9AM on the 2nd Wednesday of every other month (odd) at New Buffalo Township Hall, 17425 Red Arrow Highway New Buffalo
NEW BUFFALO AREA SCHOOLS BOARD
LISA WERNER, JOHN HASKINS, DENISE CHURCHILL, JENNIFER SUMMERS, VANESSA THUN, STEPHEN DONNELLY, GREG VOSBERG
The Board meets on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 6PM
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP BOARD
DAVID BUNTE, PAULA DUDIAK, LIZ RETTIG, RICHARD SULLIVAN, ARTHUR ANDERSON
Chikaming Board meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30PM
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month at 6:30PM
THREE OAKS
THREE OAKS TOWNSHIP BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7PM
VILLAGE OF THREE OAKS BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7PM
GRAND BEACH
Meets on the 3rd Wednesday at 5PM EST
KIMBERLY WOLNIK, CLERK-TREASURER
HARRY WALDER, JACK GRACE, ED SEBASTIAN, PETER DOERR, EDWARD BRANDES
MICHIANA
VILLAGE OF MICHIANA COUNCIL
Meets on the 2nd Friday of each month at 1PM

Village Council approves updated Parks and Beaches Master Plan

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Members of the Grand Beach Village Council adopted a resolution that approved an updated Parks and Beaches Master Plan at their Wednesday, April 15 meeting.

Councilmember and Parks and Beach Commissioner Peter Doerr said that the Parks and Beaches Committee approved a final version of the plan, and a public hearing was held on it in March.

The state requires an updated plan every five years to be eligible for grants.

Doerr said two items received the most feedback: a potential toddler playground and improving the current playground and Whitewood Pier.

He presented a rendering, which was done by committee member Norm Cherrett, of a playground. The toddler playground would be accessible for younger children and ADA compliant, which is the focus on anything being built in the village, Doerr said. The cost would be around $150,000, which Doerr said they haven't yet budget for; however, he said any donations would be appreciated.

Doerr thanked Diane Cody for doing the "heavy lifting" in working on the Master Plan. In two years, he said three master plans were put together by Cody and another organization that did it for free, so they were done at "zero cost."

"Every one of these master plans has concrete action plans that we've already acted on -we're getting things done with these plans at a minimal cost if any and that's really powerful," Doerr said.

Council members approved the draft 2026-27 contract between the Village and the Grand Beach Social Club, subject to the following changes in the draft contract: the hours of Kids Golf being changed to Fridays from 8-11 a.m. (CST) in Section 15, line 3 and reference to Kids Tennis and development of a pickleball program being deleted in its entirety in Section 16 and the subsequent sections renumbered accordingly. In addition, any reference in the Exhibit A schedule of club activities should omit the current references to Pickleball on the following Saturdays in June and July 2026: June 20th, June 27, July 4, July 11, July 18 and July 25.

The purchase of signs, which includes 23 Closed Trail signs, 40 Guidance Signs and seven Reassurance/911 markers, for the Grand Beach Nature Preserve to be installed by volunteers/staff, with a cost not to exceed $2500, was approved. Council president Harry Walder said said the request came from the Nature Preserve Committee and Chikaming Open Lands and the source of funds for it will be monies the village still has left over from the donations to purchase the preserve.

A resolution approving the submission of a State High Water Infrastructure Grant Application for Hydrographic Survey and Sediment Characterization Project in support of the Beach and Dune Restoration and Resiliency Project was adopted. The grant requires a 20% match ($13,000) which will be paid for with dedicated millage funds and in-kind contributions.

Council members approved hiring Versaw Earthworks to assist in finishing the building of the ramp at Royal Avenue down to the beach for a cost of $2500. Doerr said he's concerned there may still be storms and asked it to be pushed to mid-May, as Versaw was scheduled to come this week. It was agreed Superintendent Keith Kehoe will talk with Versaw on coming next month.

A quote for $11,358.47 from Lakeshore Customs to furnish and install a removable aluminum staircase from Pine Beach up to the viewing platform was approved. Walder said the higher quote is due to the location having a bigger drop-off.

Councilmembers approved the purchase of a 2026 Tesla Model Y AWD to replace the 2020 Chevrolet Tahoe in Michiana. The cost will be split with Michiana, with Grand Beach's cost being $33,000.

The purchase of a new Speed Trailer for the Police Department, with the total cost of $10,400 to be split equally between Michiana and Grand Beach, was approved. Police chief Ryan Layman said the trailer as a 10-plus year life span and is solar powered.

Council members approved awarding a quote to paint the Department of Public Works Building to Dunivan Painting and Power Washing for $8500, as well as approved the cost of $3,500 for the purchase of paint.

Council members approved signage, with the purchase not exceeding $1,500 and remaining donation funds to be used for the purchase, for the pickleball and tennis courts, subject to Doerr giving language for tennis to Walder for the signs. The three signs would be mounted on the fence at the courts.

Everything that irritates us about others can lead us to an understanding of ourselves. — *Carl Gustav Jung*

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Township meeting addresses data center concerns

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Concerns over a possible data center in New Buffalo Township were addressed at the township board's Monday, April 20, meeting.

Will Schoyer, who was speaking on behalf of Phoenix Investors, said he wanted to "clarify the use for 19701 Kluver Road."

"I want to be clear that Phoenix is not constructing a data center or any permanent structure on the site," he said.

Schoyer said the property is being used "on a temporary basis to support an active construction project in Michigan City."

According to a press release from the Economic Development Corporation of Michigan City, Google has acquired the data center development, Project Maize, at the long-vacant building at 402 Royal Road, which formerly housed the Federal Mogul Corp.

The site, which has been owned by Phoenix Investors since 2022, has been empty for more than 15 years.

Schoyer said the Kluver Road property is being used specifically for "parking work vehicles only," and that Phoenix has obtained a driveway permit from the Berrien County Road Department.

"We understand that even temporary uses can raise valid concerns and we take those concerns seriously – that's why we're here tonight to communicate openly and demonstrate that we are responsible neighbors committed to being good stewards of the property," he said.

Once the project is complete, Phoenix will "restore the property by removing gravel and any temporary improvements, returning the site to its prior condition."

Schoyer said they're in the process of "developing a comprehensive site plan" and will be submitting an application for a special use permit to "allow for commercial equipment storage."

At a special meeting last week, Township Supervisor Michelle Heit said that the board approved placing a one-year moratorium on data centers "while we look at what we can then have in place regarding those."

"There's been a lot of miscommunication – a lot of people think there was a data center already approved," she said.

Board members adopted a Corridor Improvement Authority Resolution, which states the township will hold a public hearing May 18 to extend the Authority for another 10 years.

Board members adopted America 250 Proclamation Resolution stating that the township is joining the Rebecca Dewey Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution in commemorating the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 2026, and the township "encourages all township residents and local communities to join in the celebration."

A resolution authorizing the submission of a grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Program was adopted. Heit said that they were reapplying for the grant, which is regarding the Harbor Country Drive trail, after being denied last year.

Board members approved payment of $53,985 to Michigan Rescue Resources LLC for battery powered extrication tools that are going on the new fire apparatus.

The following outdoor assembly permits were approved: Lume at 19471 U.S. 12 from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. May 2-3; Timber at 19615 U.S. 12 from 9 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. May 30; and Puff at 11300 Holiday Drive from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. June 6.

Board members granted a license transfer from Oasis Wellness of Bangor Township IV LL to Grams NB LLC for marijuana retail establishment at 11430 Holiday Drive New Buffalo.

Board members granted final approval of an SLU to the following to operate adult use marijuana retail establishments: Simple AG New Buffalo II LLC at 18910 Harbor Country Drive and LJA Holdings VI LLC at 19563 U.S. 12.

An invoice from MEC for $105,300 for installation of fiber broadband in the township was approved.

The fifth payment application from BG Construction for $38,502 for construction at Tribute Plaza was approved. Heit said that the pouring of concrete hasn't started and it's hoped the project will be complete by the end of May.

Charges in drug related crash that badly injured child

BY STAN MADDUX

Police say a Michigan City man admitted to being "a little high" after causing a head-on collision that resulted in an 8-year-old boy losing most of the vision in his left eye.

The boy also suffered a broken leg that required surgery to repair.

Those are among the new details obtained from the case against Shallun Culp.

Culp, 21, is charged in La Porte Superior Court 1 with Level 4 felony operating while intoxicated causing catastrophic injury along with criminal recklessness and driving on a suspended license, both Level 5 felonies.

According to the charging information filed with the court, Culp was passing a semi-truck from behind in a no-passing zone at well over 80 miles per hour in October of 2025 on U.S. 421 south of Michigan City.

He was still in the opposite lane of the two-lane highway when he struck an oncoming mini-van occupied by the boy.

According to police, Culp apologized to officers for the crash, saying he was "kinda, a little high."

Court documents also revealed Culp told investigators he "nodded off" just prior to the crash and consumed a drink mixed with cough syrup.

He allegedly tested positive for marijuana and ecstasy in his system.

The boy was airlifted to a Chicago hospital where a rod was surgically placed into his broken leg to help it heal, police said.

Doctors also determined he had lost enough vision for him to be considered legally blind in his injured eye.

According to court documents, the female driver and another passenger in the boy's vehicle along with Culp were taken by ambulance for treatment of their injuries.

About two weeks after a warrant was issued for his arrest in March, police said Culp was taken into custody at Walmart in Michigan City where he had just recently landed a job.

Police help diminish 420 chaos at marijuana dispensaries outside New Buffalo

BY STAN MADDUX

Months of planning by law enforcement seemed to help eliminate the unexpected chaos that developed from people in huge numbers flocking to the marijuana dispensaries outside New Buffalo last year on 420.

Berrien County Sheriff Chuck Heit said the placement of numerous no-parking and no-U-turn signs prior to the start of the 420 weekend this year seemed to noticeably help reduce the congestion around the 30 or so dispensaries near Interstate 94 and along U.S. 12.

"It's much more manageable this year," he said.

Sarah Schroeder, Director of Marketing at Border Buds, complimented the agencies involved in preparing better for the onslaught of 420 visitors.

"I think the township and the Berrien County Sheriff's Department did a great job of getting ahead of the traffic this year," she said.

420 is an unofficial national holiday celebrating the consumption of cannabis.

Heit said he also felt the creation of overflow parking at Exit 1 off Interstate 94 helped solve problems last year with drivers parking along streets and grassy areas seemingly everywhere around the dispensaries.

There were even vehicles backed up on Interstate 94 last year at times because of the extremely high volume of motorists heading to the marijuana shops.

There were no back-ups reported this year.

The situation also seemed to benefit from turnout not being as high possibly by 420 being on a Monday this year and the festivities such as giveaways and price discounts spread over a three day weekend.

420 last year was on a Sunday.

Heit said more officers were also assigned to patrol the areas around the dispensaries, which seemed to work in reducing traffic violations that added to last year's chaos.

There were still enough visitors this year to cause lines to form outside some of the dispensaries especially prior to their doors opening.

Free gift bags containing a variety of marijuana products went quickly each day to the first 100 customers at Border Buds, which also offered giveaways at the top of each hour and 50-percent discounts on most store items during the entire weekend.

One customer made the trip from Chicago to King of Budz hoping to take advantage of 420 related price reductions.

"I figured they'd have some deals going on to see if I can get something for cheap," he said.

Adding to the festivities at King of Budz was a food truck offering barbecue pulled pork sandwiches and other items such as chili-cheese dogs and "Loaded Nachos."

Food truck owner Stephanie Serbin said her sales during the 420 weekend were three times above what she normally receives during an ordinary weekend.

Serbin said she had to have more food brought in a couple of times to keep from selling out.

"It's been non-stop. I have no complaints whatsoever," she said.

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New Buffalo Lands Baseball Team in MLB Feeder League

BY STAN MADDUX

It appears some of the best baseball talent in the nation will play in a minor league type ballpark on a team in New Buffalo.

The players are in the Northwoods League, which has 26 teams from Michigan and other states like Indiana, Wisconsin and as far away as North Dakota.

The teams consist of players in college playing league games during the summer to stay sharp and get better to improve their odds of being drafted by major league teams.

According to the Northwoods League website, over 400 players in the league have made it to the majors since the league was formed over 30 years ago.

New Buffalo Schools Superintendent Adam Bowen said the league has already approved the terms of a 10-year contract to have an expansion team play more than 30 home games at the new high school baseball field.

The field with a diamond covered by artificial turf cost about one million dollars.

Bowen hopes to seek approval from the school board at its April 27 meeting.

"You're going to see major league level baseball players here playing at our field, which is pretty incredible," he said.

Bowen said the expansion team belongs to two men from New Buffalo who put up the money required by the league for ownership.

One of the men, Brian Williams, is a scout for the Texas Rangers.

So far, the name of the team is not known but it could be selected in a contest by the community, Bowen said.

The new high school baseball field would have grandstand seating and lights added for a full schedule of games during the summer beginning in 2027, said New Buffalo High School Athletic Director Matt Johnson.

Bowen said plans call for about 600 grandstand seats consisting of chairs behind home plate and bleachers along the infield sidelines with room to expand seating depending on attendance.

People will also be welcome to bring lawn chairs or blankets and sit beside the fence lines to watch the games.

Plans call for the additions to the baseball field to be paid for by the owners.

> "Any of the extra items is going to be funded by them solely," Bowen said.

The league has also agreed to host youth camps here during the season.

Former players in the league include future hall of fame pitcher Max Scherzer, slugger Pete Alonzo and former White Sox all-star pitcher Chris Sale, who now plays for the Atlanta Braves.

Bowen said he believes the team could become a major draw especially since New Buffalo has a large number of summer tourists to potentially tap into.

The team reflects the school district's strategic plan that includes a focus on community involvement.

"I don't think there's anything better or screams community involvement more than this," he said.

Tripp back to coach Raiders in high school basketball

BY STAN MADDUX

The head boys' varsity basketball coach at New Buffalo High School has been chosen to be the head basketball coach of the Red Arrow Raiders.

The Raiders are teams resulting from the merger of the sports programs at New Buffalo and River Valley high schools.

In his eight years in New Buffalo, Nate Tripp has brought home four district titles and once advanced to the regional championship game.

Tripp expects next season to be a rebuilding year from losing a number of talented seniors especially from New Buffalo, which won the District 4 title against Eau Claire last month.

He does have what appears to be the makings of a solid core, though, with returning players such as Colten Lijewski and John Bradshaw from New Buffalo and Bowie Strieter of River Valley.

"It's definitely going to be different. It's going to be exciting. It's going to be a challenge and I love a challenge," Tripp said.

Tripp has won over 100 games since coming to New Buffalo from Arizona where he coached for one year.

Previously, he coached for a number of years in Michigan at Grand Haven, Springlake and Holton.

Tripp said one of the challenges will be drawing as many young people as possible into the program to find the type of talent the Raiders will have to face by moving up a class from enrollment about doubling under a merged program.

"We're going to keep chasing those district titles and, hopefully, even sneak in a regional title," he said.

Tripp is no stranger to rebuilding.

Practically every player on the team that made it to the regional championship game in 2022 graduated, forcing Tripp to start almost all freshmen on a squad that won just one game the following season.

Several of those players such as Nick Haskins, Sam Tripp and Lucas Forker were on this year's district championship team.

Tripp in his usual fashion is not wasting time with plans to meet the players from River Valley within the next week or so.

He also plans to have players on the court during the summer working on things like fundamentals, so they are as ready as possible for the start of next season.

"I love to win. I don't like to lose. I don't like to wait. I'm not a very patient person," he said.

Tripp was chosen by a selection committee that had an equal number of members from each school district.

It will never rain roses: when we want to have more roses, we must plant more roses. — *George Eliot*

Data center expansion hinges on annexation

BY STAN MADDUX

Microsoft has revealed plans for a second data center on 1,200 acres of farmland beside the data center the technology giant has just started building in La Porte.

The future expansion hinges on the city council approving a request from the landowners to annex the property so it can be sold to Microsoft for the development.

The council following a heavily attended public hearing last Monday decided to take a vote on the annexation request at its May 18 meeting.

Councilman Tim Franke said the city will likely never be in such a favorable position again given the tens of millions of dollars already projected to be received in property tax revenue annually under a 20-year agreement with Microsoft on the first data center.

Several millions of dollars a year are also projected for the school corporation from the initial agreement.

How much additional money would come from the proposed expansion was not disclosed, but Franke said the amount pledged from the first data center is already a life-changing amount for the community.

"I strongly believe that we will never have an opportunity in front of us like this again," he said.

La Porte County government left out of the revenue sharing in the first agreement will share in the funding from the expansion under an agreement with the city being finalized.

Mayor Tom Dermody urged council members for their support.

"Let's continue the momentum we have and say yes," he said.

The data center now going up is on close to 500 acres of what used to be farmland along Boyd Boulevard just east of U.S. 35.

Mike Stockwell, a land development and permitting program manager for Microsoft, said six data center buildings are planned for that site while 11 more data center facilities will go on the other parcel if everything goes as planned.

"All of this is subject to change as we get into detail design," he said.

Stockwell said tree clearing and other groundwork is occurring at the first data center site with building construction to begin in the fall.

According to Microsoft, the data centers through a closed loop system will recycle water brought in on trucks to cool the servers.

At some point, the water will be hauled away for proper disposal and replaced with more water hauled to the site.

The only municipal water to be consumed will be for things like restrooms and making coffee for the employees.

Rick Kalinski, Director of Public Affairs and Economic Development for Northern Indiana Public Service Company, said the cost of meeting the large demand for energy to operate the data centers will not be passed on to existing customers.

Instead, Kalinski said Microsoft will bear the entire expense of meeting their energy needs.

"There is no cost shifting. No hidden burdens on current customers. The businesses that drive the energy demand pay for it," he said.

According to Microsoft, noise levels from diesel-powered generators running about 15 hours a year will also be minimal.

Bert Cook, Executive Director of the La Porte Economic Advancement Partnership, compared the noise at the property lines to that of a "household refrigerator."

Cook said an estimated 200 people in good paying high-tech positions will work at the first data center with expansion meaning another up to 50 employees per building.

He said there will also be "thousands" of union workers at the site for the duration of the construction expected to take five to seven years to complete.

"I feel like the impact of that cannot be overlooked," he said.

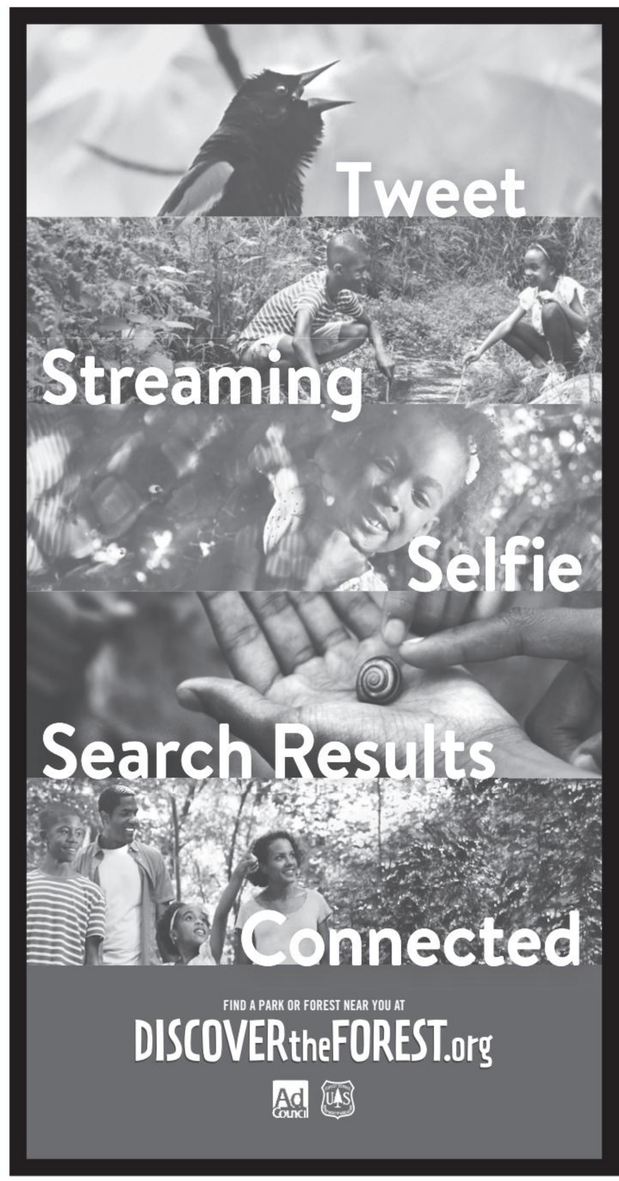
A majority of the people in the audience were supporters like La Porte Schools Superintendent Dr. Sandra Wood, who felt the new jobs from the data centers can reverse more than a decade of gradual student enrollment declines.

"We have seen students and families leave our community in search of opportunities that simply did not exist here. This project represents the first real opportunity to shift that trajectory," she said.

Resident James Baum said the project is another form of urban sprawl not welcomed in what's still an unincorporated area unless the city annexes.

"You're taking country land. People. They have dreams there. It's not fair," he said.

Microsoft announced a public open house of the project will be held April 21 at the Civic Auditorium from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.



2026 Guide unveiled

CHAMBER REORGANIZATION ADDRESSED

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Before diving into the pages of the 2026 Harbor Country Guide, readers can get a first-person perspective of diving into the wide, blue waters of Lake Michigan.

Tim Rogers, owner of Fusion Design Group Ltd., said that Kimberlee Wendt, former executive director of the Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce, gave him the idea "to show a perspective of you being in Harbor Country" on the cover.

"So, we came up with the idea of having a kid jumping off the boat, with the dunes in the background," Rogers said.

Rogers, who in addition to the cover did the Guide's publication graphic design and layout, did an image that was put together from a few other images and "used some tools that make it look like a painting."

For the past 26 years, Rogers has designed the Guide's covers. He credited Shelby Sexton, who works at Fusion, for contributing to its inside.

This year's Guide Committee was Rogers, Wendt, Amber Kennedy, Rachel Klein and Heather Gradowski, vice president of the chamber's board of directors.

The annual guide was unveiled at Journyeman Distillery in Three Oaks Thursday, April 16.

Also thanked was Chuck Garasic of Sweethaven Resort, who is always on hand to help offload boxes of guides from the printer delivery.

Gradowski gave an update on the chamber's recent reorganization, which was announced in an email to members March 9.

A March 31 email stated that the chamber will be transitioning to a "skill-based, collaborative staffing model and the elimination of the executive director position."

"We are transitioning to an egalitarian approach where staff members report directly to the board rather than a single director," the email said.

The email said the chamber is searching for two new staff members, who will work alongside the part-time social media coordinator "in a collaborative environment." Staff members will report directly to the board and committees.

Gradowski told chamber members that the world is "constantly changing – both globally and locally."

As a result, the chamber must "change and grow to better meet new challenges and, most important, to better meet your needs."

"This means we have to allocate our resources differently, we have to think and plan differently, while continuing to support and grow Harbor Country," Gradowski said.

Across the county, Gradowski said that chambers have been consolidating "under one umbrella," with the "mission to

Journeyman co-owner Bill Welter welcomes guests

Heather Gradowski gives a chamber update

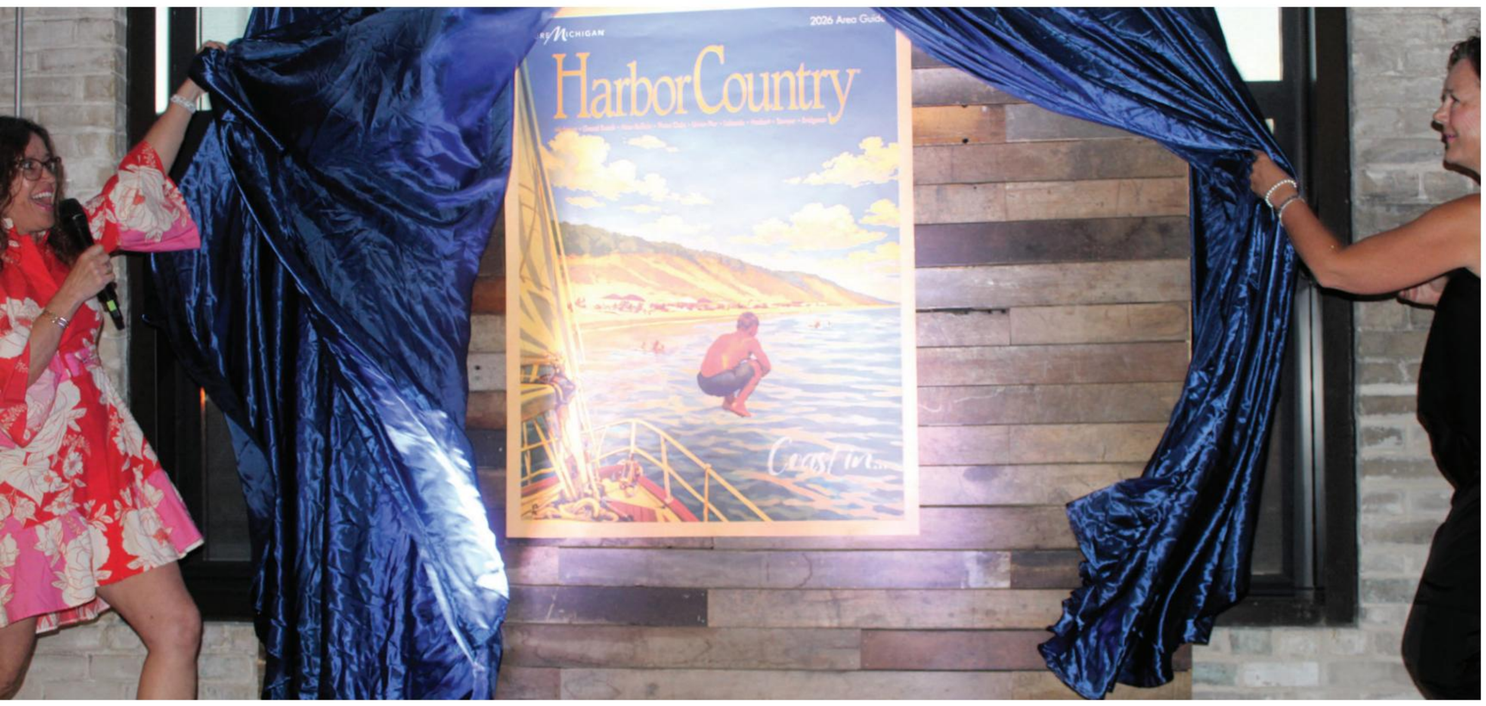
Shannon Swim and Jeff Miles enjoy the new Guide

Traci Lauricella, Karla Madison and Sharon Funk mingle before the unveiling

Guests mix and mingle in Warren Hall at Journeyman

Guests enjoy appetizers

Heather Gradowski, Bill Welter and Tim Rogers stand in front of the Guide's cover



Heather Gradowski and JoAnne Fitzsimmons-Abele unveil the Guide's cover

connect the northern part and southern part of our county," with the idea "to optimize economic growth, and to compete together and win as a region."

Chamber Growth Alliances (CGAs) have also been forming, which "are linking our local municipalities with local chambers of commerce to drive economic growth."

Gradowski said that Harbor Country is "special," with the founders working to protect it with a trademark.

"Our communities are the gateway to Michigan, and our businesses are supported by one of the most significant tourist destinations in the Midwest region - and no one knows our communities and our businesses' advantages and challenges better than the people who live and work here," she said.

The chamber is celebrating 45 years as an independent chamber – which isn't going to change.

"We are very excited about this new chapter, we're excited about collaborating with our neighbors, our municipalities and their members to ensure that we are serving you in the most meaningful, relevant ways," Gradowski said.

Bill Welter, who co-owns Journeyman with his wife, Johanna, said that they started the business in 2010, which was on the "tail end" of the Great Recession.

He said the chamber has been "critical and instrumental" in "keeping our storefront full" as well as "bringing businesses together, promoting our region far and wide and driving awareness that fills southwest Michigan with people that keep our buildings and towns alive, energized prosperous and deeply rooted in these wonderful communities that make up Harbor Country."

"Because together as a group, we can achieve so much more and we are so grateful to the Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce for being here tonight supporting not only our business but everything they do in Southwest Michigan," Welter said.

Members of the Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors are John Bonkoske, board president; Gradowski, vice president; John Quackenbush, treasurer and member of the Finance Committee; Jessica Nance, secretary; Justin Fredrickson, director; Rachel Watkins, director; Erika Milovich, director; Pam Wessler, director and JoAnne Fitzsimmons-Abele, director.

Current staff members are Renee Heller, social media manager, and Robin Quackenbush, interim office manager.

Live entertainment for the evening was provided by Frank Schoenwitz (Witz DJ).

From the Dish Pit...

A HIGHSCHOOLER'S TAKE ON REAL LIFE TOPICS

BY SYLVIE DARLING

Worth the Wait

Every year, April opens our doors and offers us a glimpse of summer – warbling birds, tender buds, and milky blue skies. She lets us lean closer, breathing in the smell of earth and rain and living things, only to slam the door again. The slam was especially jarring one morning as I woke up to a sheet of frost on my windshield. Frost? I had hoped we were done with icy white substances for the next six months. Sighing, I dug the plastic scraper out of my trunk and awkwardly stabbed at the windshield, suddenly unsure of how to clear it. Winter must have been a long time ago.

The next day, the temperature had risen again, and people lingered a little longer in the shop. A spark of hope glimmered in their eyes as they cracked jokes about the weather and sipped iced lattes. Later that day, I heard an older man remark, "What's not to love about Michigan springs, eh? Winter and summer all in one package!" I wanted to point out that it was, in fact, the worst of both seasons, but I held my tongue. As if reading my mind, his wife responded, "But don't you get tired of the spring here? I mean, they're so unpredictable – rain one day and then sun the next." As I headed back to the Dish Pit, I heard the man's gravelly voice reply, "Yes, but I think summer is worth the wait."

His words lingered in my mind while I drove home. "What's not to love about Michigan springs?" At first, I struggled to understand how the man saw beauty in such an unpredictable season. We live in a world of instant gratification, where comfort and pleasure are immediately at our fingertips. When we are unsatisfied, we press skip. But nature doesn't have a skip button; and no matter how hard we try, we will never be able to jump from the bleak, cold winter to the steady, warm summer. Spring is nature's way of forcing us to be patient and to appreciate the in-between. Snow melting. Flowers unfurling. Birds returning home. And if we're patient, we can find the beauty in the waiting.

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A Writer's Life...

DURING THE GOLDEN AGE OF TELEVISION ANIMATION

BY JACK OLESKER

Wrestling with Studio Politics

There were two 'camps' at DIC -- Camp Andy (Heyward) and Camp Jean (Chalopin). As a staffer, which camp you were in depended on whether it was Andy or Jean who initially bought you in to DIC. I was in Camp Jean, since Jean had started me off with The Littles script assignments.

There was often an overlapping of the two camps. For instance, it was Kevin from Camp Andy who told me to reach out to Andy about Sandy Fries' not making the delivery schedule so I'd end up taking Sandy's position as story editor for Care Bears.

While Jean played a major role in DIC's overall creative affairs, the day-to-day creative operations fell to Camp Andy's staffers, including producers Kevin O'Donnell, Michael Malini and their crews. Most staffers in Camp Jean were located in Paris, running that part of the company or in Japan with Jean's KK C&D animation studio.

While Andy was DIC's president, everyone was aware Jean owned DIC. No one made a big deal about the camps because most of the time it didn't matter. I'm telling you all this because later the two separate camps will play a big part in my career.

Hulk Hogan's Rock 'n' Wrestling was an animated DIC series, but we shot short live action segments with the wildly popular WWF wrestlers to serve as bookends for the animated part of the series. And no one – I mean no one -- was more wildly popular in 1980s wrestling than Hulk Hogan.

Kevin had given me a ticket to see a taping of the wrestlers at the Los Angeles Forum – I assumed an atta boy gesture for my work on Predicaments. I was excited driving to the Forum for the taping of the live action segments for DIC's hit CBS series.

I parked in the Forum's half-full lot, the evening's matches still a couple hours away. A guard directed me to where the taping was to take place. Cameras and lighting equipment were already set up inside in a large roped off area, lighting, sound and camera personnel getting ready to tape. It was very exciting for me to be on the set, even if I was only a passive observer.

Kevin, serving as Executive-in-Charge, was responsible for the overall activities and he seemed constantly in motion. Michael Maliani, conferring with a camera operator, was the second unit director, which meant he would direct the wrestlers' live action segments. Lori, whose titles constantly changed from series to series, was the script coordinator, responsible for all written scripts. Mert Rich was billed as a consultant, meaning he contributed comedy dialogue and suggestions for 'bits'.

When the dust settled, DIC superstar writer and Jean's fair-haired boy, Jeffrey Scott, would have written twenty-three of the series' twenty-six episodes, a lesson I would remember. Seeming to buttress Camp Jean's influence, KK C&D director, artist and co-founder Tetsuo Katayama was the series' producer. But in truth he was only the producer for the animated sequences.

Standing near the set, I thought it made sense Andy's staff was handling the live action segments. Given how little Jean knew about wrestling, I no more expected him to be on the set than I did for him to have negotiated the series' deal with WWF's Vince McMahon.

And then, without warning, a door opened and Hulk Hogan walked onto the set!

HOROSCOPE

APRIL 23-29, 2026

AS INTERPRETED BY SANDY "STAR" BENDT

ARIES MARCH 21—APRIL 19

Focus on being more conscientious with spending habits this week. It will be easy to get caught up in social pressure to cover all purchases or to pay the bill for everyone's night out. It's time to split the bill. Even if the festivities are at your house, make it potluck style where everyone brings something.

TAURUS APRIL 20—MAY 20

Start embracing yourself as an individual that can standout and be seen without the need to lean on others. You are entering a very positive phase, where anything is possible. Don't let lack of money or education hold you back. Do and say the things you need to and the rest will follow.

GEMINI MAY 21—JUNE 21

Dig deeper into your life and start handling the dark and dramatic issues directly. This is not the time to be afraid of shadows or the unfamiliar. Authority figures may not be able to give you clear direction now. So, grab that inner light and embrace the night my friend.

CANCER JUNE 22—JULY 22

Let people think and do what they want this week. There is no point to explaining or trying to understand their point of view as there is a major uncertainty principle radiating from the stars. People's perspectives and where their loyalties stand will be a mystery better left unsolved at this time.

LEO JULY 23—AUGUST 22

The beginnings of new work ethics or modes of production are emerging and there may be some changes you need to make in your approach to dealing with clients or securing resources. Your positive attitude will be the key to succeeding now. You will achieve success now where you couldn't before.

VIRGO AUGUST 23—SEPTEMBER 22

You may be dealing with some family legacies or secrets this week. There is a good chance that you were made aware of things a few weeks back but now it is more official or out in the open. As much as you would like to take charge of the whole situation, it may not be your place. Patience wise one.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23—OCTOBER 22

It's best to keep conversations off the record and avoid official meetings this week, as some unusual information will be surfacing that could affect previous judgments or statements. It's best to let situations unfold fully before committing or signing contracts. Follow your gut feelings.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23—NOVEMBER 21

Understand that the things you say have a lot of sway or power over others. So, be cautious with sensitive types and avoid topics that can trigger issues for people. Use your powers of persuasion for good and help others feel good about situations. Hero or villain; you decide.

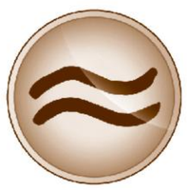
SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22—DECEMBER 21

Get serious about securing resources and maintaining your investments this week. The urge to goof off and play will be strong but be sure you get your chores done and bills paid before you hit the town. You can get the things you want if you really buckle down and go for it.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22—JANUARY 19

Sometimes you have to show off your talents a little to let people see that you know what you're talking about. This is the week to push through and use your personal strengths to conquer adversity. Avoid adopting a limited perspective on solutions to problems and use the strength of your imagination.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20—FEBRUARY 18



Start communicating more with people. Open up about experiences or ideas you have had. It may appear like the best thing to do is retreat or remain silent but doing so may make the problem more complicated. An open approach is best now, especially with friends.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19—MARCH 20

You will be very lucky in the career and fame department. It's all about the networking and connections now. There is a good chance you will be dealing with people from the past again but this time you will succeed where you couldn't before and the connection will be much more lucrative.

The greatest of follies is to sacrifice health for any other kind of happiness. — *Arthur Schopenhauer*

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Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9.

	3					7		1
		1				5		
		7		4	5			
		5	4		1			
		4	5	9	6			
							9	
4				5	2	1		3
2			3					6
		9		1				

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Civilian Conservation Corps (abbr.)
4 Bean cheese
8 Label
11 Glass (pref.)
13 Twist
14 River (Sp.)
15 Zulu warriors
16 Sneaking
18 Retail liquor dealer (abbr.)
20 Measuring instruments
21 Without a country
24 Fortunate (India)
25 Receipt (abbr.)
26 Disseminate
28 Arrange as hangings
32 Occipital protuberances
34 Federal Bureau of Investigation (abbr.)
36 Ancient Gr. city
37 River into the Rhone
39 Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (abbr.)
41 Illicit drug
42 Compass direction
44 New York river
46 Characteristics
49 Grand Old Party (abbr.)
50 Backward
53 Become insignificant
56 Civil Aeronautics Admin. (abbr.)
57 Airplane
58 Pounds per sq. inch, diff. (abbr.)
59 Soviet Socialist Republic (abbr.)
60 Attention getting sound
61 Spring

DOWN

1 22nd Greek letter
2 Cymric (abbr.)
3 Strauss opera
4 Township (abbr.)
5 Propel
6 Jumping amphibians
7 Up
8 School course (abbr.)
9 Senior (Fr.)
10 Swamps
12 Bagpipe hole
17 Shrine (Fr.)
19 Some (Fr.)
21 Sister of Ares
22 Ohio city
23 Defense (abbr.)
27 Boxing org.
29 Cenis (2 words)
30 ____ Rivera, CA
31 Television channel
33 Girl's name
35 Legendary Celt
38 Noose
40 Reek
43 Colorado park
45 Cup to hold a gem
46 Muscular spasms
47 Royal Naval Air Service (abbr.)
48 Caucasian language
51 Hesitation sounds
52 Iota
54 Edge of crater
55 Girl's name

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

R	C	M	P	■	L	A	T	H	■	M	B	A
S	H	E	A	■	A	B	A	A	■	A	O	L
V	A	T	S	■	M	O	W	N	■	R	O	T
■	■	A	H	A	B	■	■	G	A	I	N	E
G	U	L	A	G	■	H	A	S	T	■	■	■
A	S	L	■	E	G	A	D	■	A	C	U	S
S	C	I	■	D	A	T	E	S	■	I	D	I
P	A	C	E	■	L	E	N	A	■	N	I	S
■	■	■	S	T	A	D	■	B	U	N	C	H
N	E	S	K	I	■	■	N	E	R	A	■	■
A	L	P	■	B	R	O	O	■	A	M	I	D
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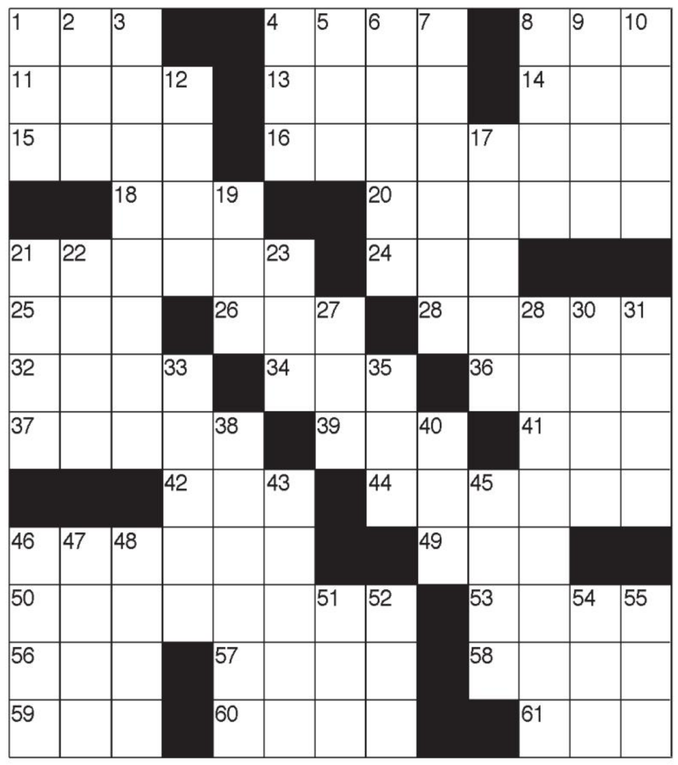
A	S	S	■	A	D	D	S	■	I	N	K	Y



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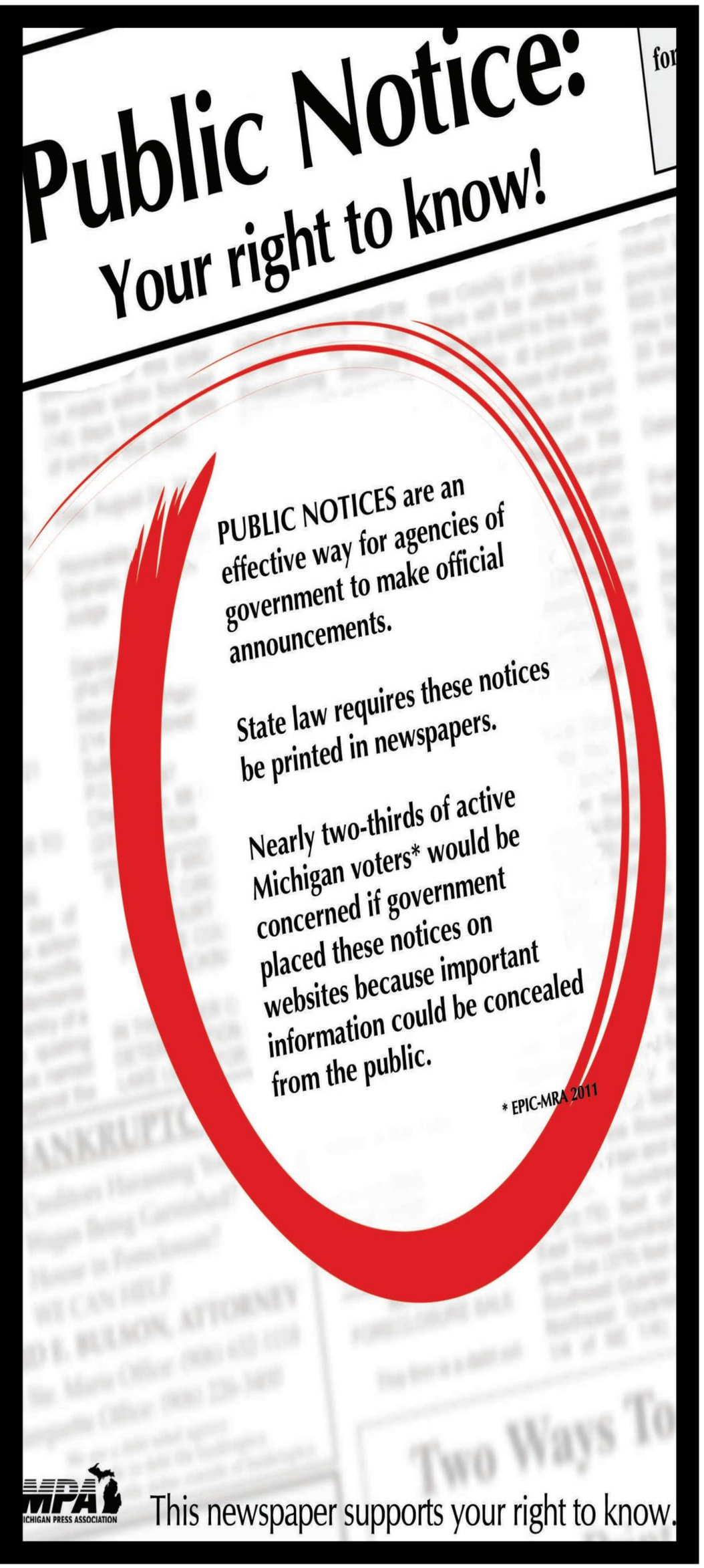
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Nearly two-thirds of active Michigan voters* would be concerned if government placed these notices on websites because important information could be concealed from the public.
* EPIC-MRA 2011
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This newspaper supports your right to know.

Dunes Summer Art Theatre opens registration for 2026 youth education program

Dunes Arts Summer Theatre has opened registration for two sessions of the Dunes Arts Youth Theatre education program, which will be led by members of the organization's professional company.

For more than 75 years, Dunes Arts Summer Theatre has inspired young people through the power of live theatre.

Set on the historic summer theatre campus at 288 Shady Oak Drive in Michiana Shores, the programs offer hands-on training that sparks creativity, builds confidence and fosters a lifelong appreciation for the arts — all in a place where generations of young performers have found their voice.

The program's approach centers on creating fun, empowering, and inspiring experiences. Students learn directly from professional artists and educators, develop artistic skills and confidence through acting, singing, stagecraft, and collaboration, and bring their work to life in a final performance or presentation that celebrates their growth and achievements.

"Dunes Arts Foundation's summer camp was a transformative experience for our daughter," said Kelley Smith, chief administrator in the Mayor's Office for the City of Michigan City. "From her very first day, Annalise was energized, engaged, and eager to share everything she was learning — from improv to vocal performance. She loved working with the instructors and connecting with other students, and by the end of camp we saw a new level of confidence and stage presence emerge. Watching her shine as the Fairy Godmother in 'Cinderella' was unforgettable. This program doesn't just teach the arts — it helps young people find their voice. We can't wait to return this summer."

Musical Theatre will be from noon to 3 p.m. CT, Monday through Thursday, July 13-31, which will conclude with a showcase production on Saturday, Aug. 1. The cost is $280 per student; $250 each when enrolling two or more, for ages 8 to 18. Led by Education Coordinator Michael Fallon, alongside professional actors and educators from our "Avenue Q" production, students will build performative, creative and collaborative skills through solos, scenes, and ensemble work, culminating in a final showcase performance. Students may participate in acting, singing, dancing, or any combination, with roles tailored to their individual strengths and interests.

As Director of Choral Activities, Musical Theatre Director and Technical Theatre Supervisor at Alan B. Shepard High School in Palos Heights for nearly 30 years, Fallon and his students have received numerous awards for their ensembles in traditional concert choirs and grand champion show choirs through the Midwest.

Theatre Mentorship will take place in the afternoons (exact meeting times chosen mutually) Monday and Friday, July 13-31. It will conclude with a final presentation for parents, family and friends on Saturday, August 1 at 11 a.m. CT. The cost is $50 per one hour session or six classes for $250 (save $50) for students ages 13 to 18.

Designed for highly motivated students, this program offers a unique opportunity to prepare for college and beyond through personalized, one-on-one mentorship with professional actors from the 2026 company. The program is led by Artistic Director Steve Scott, who has directed more than 300 productions nationally and internationally. Scott previously served as a longtime producer at Goodman Theatre, where he oversaw more than 200 productions over three decades and earned multiple honors for his contributions to Chicago theatre.

For more information or to purchase individual tickets ($35), senior/student tickets ($30), group sales ($25 for four or more) and season subscriptions ($150), visit dunesARTS.org or call 219-879-7509.

Follow along on social media @ dunesartsfoundation. — STAFF REPORTS

1 in 7 children faces hunger.

There's more than enough food in America for every child who struggles with hunger. Help get kids the food they need by supporting Feeding America, the nationwide network of food banks. Together, we can solve hunger™.
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ad COUNCIL

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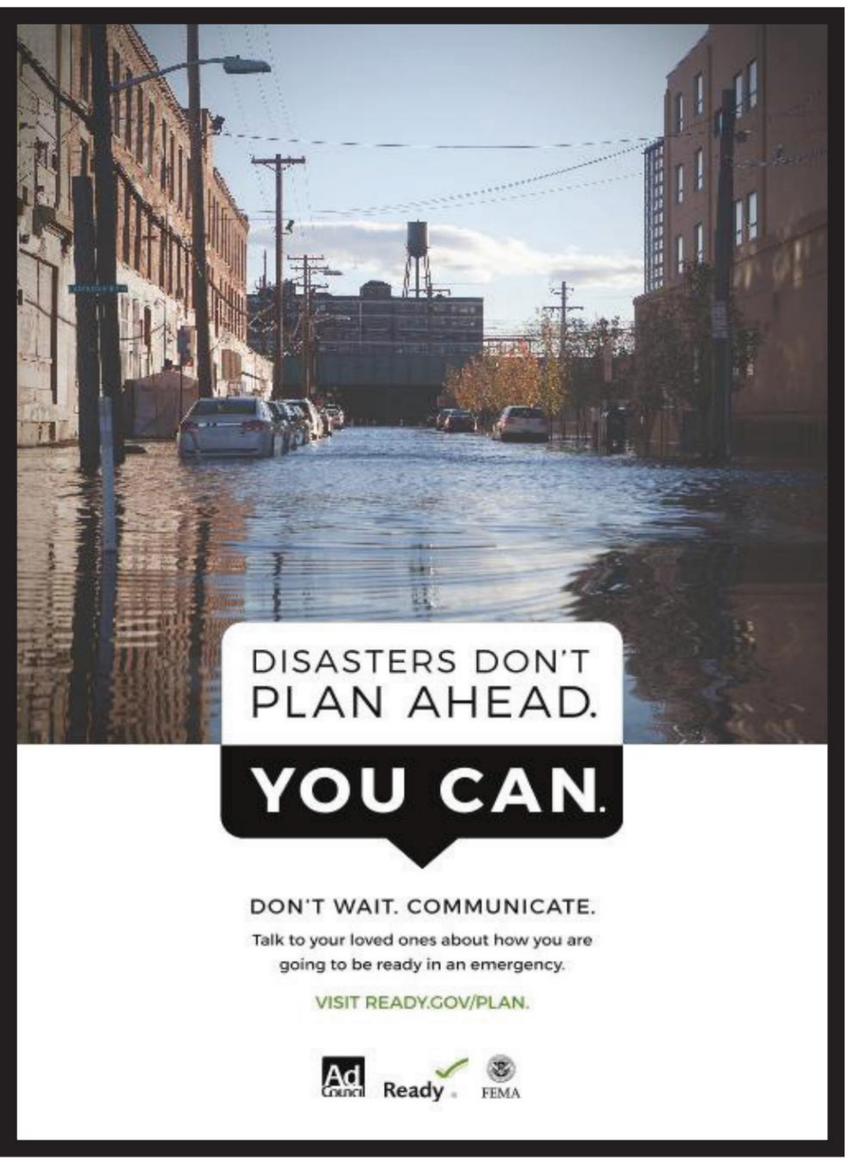
PUBLIC NOTICES

VILLAGE OF GRAND BEACH
WEED CONTROL AND GRASS CUTTING NOTICE

To property owners and occupants of land in the Village of Grand Beach, Berrien County, Michigan. Notice is given that all weeds, brush and grass growing on any lands must be cut and maintained at a height not to exceed six inches and destroyed and removed to prevent such weeds, brush, and grass from going to seed, from becoming a fire hazard and/or creating a condition detrimental to the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the Village.

Failure to comply with the notice and ordinance on or before May 1 shall make the property owner liable for the costs of cutting, destroying and removing the weeds, brush, and grass by the Village or its representatives or agents, and the costs may be levied and collected in the same manner as taxes are levied and collected, with the costs being a lien upon the land. The Village may cut the weeds, brush and grass as often as necessary to achieve compliance with the ordinance and charge costs to the property owner.

KIMBERLY WOLNIK
CLERK-TREASURER



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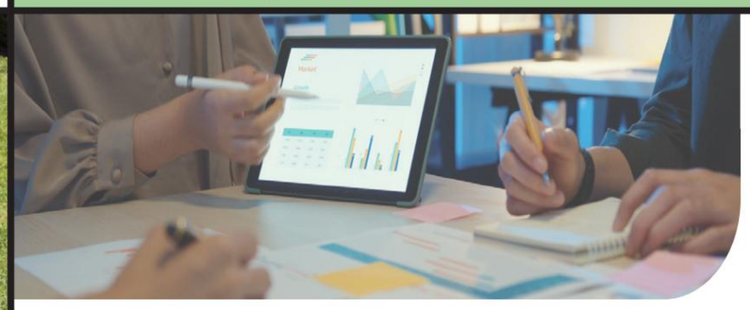
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To Your Health

COLUMN BY KAREN EDWARDS ND

GROUNDING YOUR WAY TO BETTER HEALTH

Chronic pain? Insomnia? Inflammation? Mood and sleep disorders? Stressed out? Try Earth Therapy. This is called Grounding or Earthing and could be your missing link to better health and wellbeing.

Earthing is to go barefoot outdoors. Like humans did for all time until the invent of shoes. When you allow you skin to have direct contact with the earth, it transfers natural electrons into your body. It feels like you are charging your human battery and being plugged back into life.

Why do you think you feel so wonderful after a day at the beach? You are barefoot, you are getting the sunshine, the sand between your toes. All the elements of the earth that we desperately need and are lacking due to synthetic shoes that we wear.

Studies show that earthing re-synchronizes cortisol hormones with our circadian rhythm. This improves sleep, reduces pain and stress, and resets hormones.

Wearing synthetic shoes outside does not allow the soul to connect directly to the ground. Our bare feet can absorb the earth's electrons for these health benefits. Our feet contain reflexes on the sole that directly reflect to organs and parts of our body through meridians. Wearing shoes all of the time outside does not allow the sole to connect directly to the ground. Can we do this in the winter? You bet! You won't be long due to the cold, but you can shovel a spot that has grass and scuff your feet back and forth there. Recharged.

Barefoot was a natural state outdoors in days gone by. You know you feel better and sleep better when you have gone barefoot.

Connecting to nature barefoot, is one of the best anti-anxiety, anti-depressants that you can get. And it is free! Take a walk barefoot, scuff your feet on your lawn (providing you don't have chemicals sprayed on it.)

Next time you are feeling stressed, overwhelmed, anxious, or depressed, take off your shoes and walk outside on the bare earth. Hug a tree! Let all of Natures pure energy envelope you. Stop and look all around at all that nature has to offer. Unplug. Engage all of your senses and you will be amazed at how you can make a difference to your nervous system and all your cells.

You can also purchase earthing shoes or mats, that will allow pressure on specific points of the feet, giving you that reflexology therapy. Earthing shoes offer the primal experience of living grounded to the earth. Insulated modern rubber sole shoes interrupt our body's ability to connect with the earth's energy in the way our ancient ancestors lived. Primitive cultures lived their lives in constant connection with earth by going barefoot or wearing leather soled shoes.

You can also purchase grounding sheets and even mattresses. These help those who can no longer get outside to go barefoot, or the long winters that we are not grounding to Mother Earth. Get grounding, for the health of it.

Watch this documentary that could be life changing for you.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=44ddtR0XDVU

Disclaimer: Everything here is for nutritional education and is not meant to diagnose, treat prevent or cure. See your doctor when you have questions.

PET OF THE WEEK

VALENTINA

Valentina just wants to be loved. She is about one year old, spayed, and weighs about eight pounds. She has birthed five kittens already while in her foster home. Valentina is child-friendly, very playful, and loves belly rubs.She has the cutest purrs and meows. Make Valentina part of your home today.

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New Buffalo Times
— SINCE 1942 —

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ad
BECAUSE YOU WERE THERE FOR ME WHEN I HAD NO ONE, I STARTED LOVING MYSELF AGAIN.
Kaliee M.
Everything you say and do creates an impact.
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Exit One Events festivals landing in New Buffalo

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Starting next month, Exit One Events will be filling New Buffalo with a steady stream of festivals featuring home and gardening, a wide variety of music genres, food and more

John Moultrie, executive director of Exit One, said that he hopes the festivals will cater to a large variety of interests to those who attend.

"I'm hoping it will be received well, I'm hoping it will make a difference – honestly, I just want to help entertain the community in a way in which it gives people options," he said.

Per a press release, the events will "celebrate local culture while driving tourism, supporting small businesses, and strengthening the economic vitality of the Harbor Country region."

The following festival lineup will take place: Home, Garden and Builder Festival, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. May 16 on North Whittaker Street; Red, White and BBQ Country Music Festival 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. July 3, at Lions Park; Oh Yeah Music Festival 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. July 4; Ship and Shore Blues and Soul Festival from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Aug. 8 and 11a.m. to 7 p.m. Aug. 9 at Lions Park; iRock Jazz and Wine Festival Sept. 5 and Beach Glass Brew Festival Oct. 10.

Calling it "basically a trade show," Moultrie said the Home, Garden and Builder Festival will feature home improvement specialists, custom builders, and interior designers alongside local artisans, landscapers, and garden experts, to assist with home improvement needs.

"I've always found it difficult to find who's going to do the lawn or if I need someone to build a deck or I need concrete done - no one knows where to go, so this is your business directory for anything you want to do with your home that you can think of," Moultrie said.

The festival, which will be right in downtown New Buffalo, will not have any food or beverages or music, as he wants to encourage people to wander into the stores and restaurants and shop and eat there.

The Lubeznik Center for the Arts in Michigan City will be curating the artisan vendor lineup for the festival.

Additional trade and artisan vendors can sign up at exitoneevents.org.

Up next, the Red, White & BBQ festival will feature a lineup of country music artists and barbeque from some of the region's best pitmasters and food trucks, ice-cold beer and wine. The next day, festivalgoers can enjoy a non-genre music festival that will feature everything from soul to jazz to Latin music at the Oh Yea Music Festival.

Live blues and soul performers will take the stage at the Ship and Shore Blues and Soul Festival, which will also feature a mix of curated food trucks.

Moultrie said each festival promises to feature a "diversity of food."

"We'll have barbeque, tacos, burgers, popcorn - all the other major factors that we think that will be a big win for us from a sense of diversity and products being served there," he said.

The Beach Glass Brew Festival, which Moultrie described as being a "giant beer garden with music," will be open to those who are 21 and older in the streets of New Buffalo.

Except for the 21 and over Beach Glass Brew Festival, each festival will offer free community access for the first two hours.

Moultrie said each festival will feature a student-operated hydration tent staffed by students from New Buffalo High School, with proceeds directly benefiting school affiliated clubs and programs. Students will also work alongside production teams, gaining experience for their resumes.

Moultrie said Exit One, which is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization, is underwriting the RAD Program with the police department as well as giving money back to groups such as the fire department and Lions Club.

"We're doing a lot to give back to the community as well," he said.

To volunteer for any festival and for more information on each one, visit www.exitoneevents.com.

GARDEN CLUB'S ANNUAL PLANT SALE NEXT MONTH

The River Valley Garden Club's famous plant sale is scheduled to take place from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, May 16, rain or shine. at Harbert Community Park, 13300 Red Arrow Highway, Harbert, just north of the Chikaming Township Center.

The sale will feature home grown perennials, ground covers, vegetable plants, bushes and small trees, plus peonies and a number of native plants, said Elizabeth Palulis, garden club president.

"The sale is a lot of fun and a good place to get advice and ideas for your garden," she added.

The plants are separated by sun and shade so customers have an easier time picking out the plants that will work for their garden. In addition, the trees and bushes are separated from plants and plenty of advice will be available from the garden club members.

Aside from the annual plant sale, the club has field trips, guest speakers, a member's plant auction, and hands-on workshops. Anyone with an interest in gardening is always welcome at the River Valley Garden Club. The club is also involved in service projects throughout the year. Members come from Indiana and throughout southwest Michigan.

For more information contact Elizabeth Palulis at 269-362-4564 or email her at evpalulis@yahoo.com.

Also visit the club's website, www.rivervalleygardenclub.org. — STAFF REPORTS

HIKERS TO EXPLORE LOVE CREEK COUNTY PARK

Once again, Berrien County's Chief Naturalist, Derek Pelc, will be leading members of the Harbor Country Hikers on his favorite wildflower trails at Love Creek County Park at 2 p.m. Saturday, May 2.

These trails highlight many of Michigan's "Ephemeral" wildflowers from trillium and hepatica to Dutchman's breeches and toothwort and many, many more. Hikers should be prepared for the occasional spring drizzle.

Besides the Nature Center, mountain bike and well-groomed cross-country ski and fat-tire bike trails, the natural features of this park include around 200 acres of meadows, forests, marshes and creeks.

Although membership is preferred, all are welcome to attend this hike. For more information, including driving directions, visit the Hikers' website, www.harborcountryhikers.org, or its Facebook page.

— STAFF REPORTS

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